

THREE COUNT®

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Luger Out

Motorcycle injury sidelines WBF star indefinitely

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

Lex Luger, the focal point of Vince McMahon's World Bodybuilding Federation, was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident the week of June 14, and was unable to participate in the WBF's inaugural pay-per-view show June 13 in Long Beach, Calif.

Luger (real name Larry Pfohl) reportedly sustained a shattered elbow, torn knee ligaments and abdominal and groin muscles, and multiple lacerations from the accident, which occurred in the Atlanta area. One source told the *Wrestling Observer Newsletter* that Luger probably would have died had he not been wearing his motorcycle helmet. Details on Luger's exact injuries are sketchy because the World Wrestling Federation has refused to release details on the accident. It is known Luger underwent a type of knee surgery in Mobile, Ala., by famous physician Dr. Brian Mitchell and was released from the hospital on June 14.

Luger was at his Atlanta gym a few days after being released working out with his one healthy arm. At one point, Luger's injuries were considered career-threatening, but preliminary reports say Luger will be able to return to wrestling (or bodybuilding) by next March.

Three Count reader Mike Rosenthal watched the WBF pay-per-view show and submitted the following highlights:

- Thirteen references were made to the WBF's reported steroid testing policy, as well as a lengthy interview with Dr. Mauro Di Pasquale, the administrator and overseer of the WBF's testing program. Among the quotes during the posing: "This is the

personification of what the WBF is all about. 100 percent drug-free." "Not a steroid in his body (referring to Tony Pearson)." "A level playing field for everyone." "The most comprehensive drug

(Cont. on Page 2)

Inside...

Muse's Japan -- Pg 3
Rey's Lucha -- Pg 4-5
Letters -- Pg 6-8
Coulter int. -- Pg 9-11
Reader Results -- Pg 12
Marvez's Fla. -- Pg 13
Hanlin's View -- Pg 14-15

Rogers Terminally Ill; Soronaka Dead

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count editor

"Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers, one of the greatest performers in wrestling history, sustained two strokes June 22, and has been diagnosed as brain dead by his son, Dave.

Rogers, 71, sustained his first stroke Monday morning at 6:30 a.m. while in the bathroom of his Lauderdale-by-the-Sea home in South Florida. Rogers was taken to Holy Cross Hospital, and was cognizant and alert later that afternoon, Dave Rogers said. But while Buddy was talking to a minister in German, his eyes rolled back in his head as he sustained what Dave described as a "massive stroke."

As of June 26, Rogers had been moved from the hospital's intensive care unit to a regular room, where he was listed as stable. Dave Rogers said Buddy's life-support system will soon be terminated, because "Buddy would never want to go out this way. He wants to be remembered as the Nature Boy."

Pro wrestling is also mourning the loss of Masami "Sammy" Soronaka on June 14 from a brain tumor in Tampa. Soronaka, 45, helped train The Lightning Kid, and was responsible for booking American talent for the Pro Wrestling Fujiwara shoot-fighting group. Some of his findings include

Bart Vail, Ken Shamrock and Jerry Flynn. Soronaka also wrestled as V.C. Mihn in the defunct Global Wrestling Alliance and was a PWF referee.

Full biographies will appear in Issue 39 of *Three Count*.

Because of production difficulties and problems in the temporary transfer of the *Three Count* offices to New York City, a delay in publication occurred. The current plan is to publish another issue on June 29 and resume the regular printing schedule of every Wednesday after that. Some double issues will be produced beginning in August to make up for the missing weeks.

Briefly...

• **Marty Janetty** will not have to serve any time in prison after being sentenced April 28 in Hillsborough (Fla.) County Court on charges stemming from a drug-related arrest last January in Tampa.

Janetty, former member of the World Wrestling Federation tag-team **The Rockers**, was given six months of "community control" and 2 1/2 years of probation on charges of possession of cocaine and opposing an officer with violence. Janetty, however, was not found guilty on the charges, nor was he given any sentence for the possession of drug paraphernalia charge he was also originally booked for.

• **Hot WWF rumor:** **The Beverly Brothers** will steal **Freckles the Puppet** from the **Legion of Doom** and bring the doll to **Papa Shango**, so a voodoo curse can be placed upon it. The curse backfires, and **Freckles** comes to life as **Bob Backlund**. Scary or what?

• **The Lightning Kid**, **Missy Hyatt**, **Jason Hervey** and I were on **John Arezzi's** Pro Wrestling Spotlight radio show June 14 on WEVD (1050 AM) in New York City. The Kid, whose first child should be born by this date, is currently working some independent shows in Minneapolis and has some future shots lined up in the Northeast. His WCW plans are presently on hold, although he has a good attitude toward working for **Bill Watts** should the chance arise. Hyatt was excellent, with candid comments about **Paul E. Dangerously** (even though I whole-heartedly disagree with her, I have to give her credit for being gutsy enough to say them) and **Eddie Gilbert**.

• Interesting news from another New York wrestling radio show. "Vicious Vince's World of Wrestling," orchestrated by **Vince Russo**, had its first show with WWF performers June 19 at a WWF show in Long Island. Russo had **Howard Finkel** and **Curt Hennig** on as guests. Russo's show was also plugged on the arena scoreboard.

THREE COUNT®

Alex Marvez..... Editor/Publisher
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Carlos Rey..... Lucha Libre
John Muse..... Japan

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Sheet Spotlight

Here's a look at the top stories of some of the other wrestling newsletters, with subscription information:

• **Dave Meltzer's Wrestling Observer Newsletter** (June 8): Complete report on **Don Owen's** retirement; List of new WCW rules and analysis; Look at outside coverage of steroid epidemic; Japanese television rundown. (June 15) Details on Summer Slam ticket sales; First to report WCW will run Charlotte stadium show on July 18; Mid-year front-runners for year-end awards. *Weekly; \$1.50 an issue. P.O. Box 1228, Campbell CA 95009-1228.*

• **Wade Keller's Pro Wrestling Torch** (May 28): Details of **Kip Frey's** departure from WCW and **Bill Watts'** new rules, with an **Eric Krol** column; Recent Watts interview, and letters on the move. (June 4): **Bruce Mitchell's** thoughts on Steiners debacle from **Wrestle War**; Part four of **Jim Ross** interview. (June 11): **Mark Madden's** view on why WWF popularity is slipping; More of the Ross interview; **Paul E. Dangerously's** real-life opinions on **Missy Hyatt**. Ouch. *Weekly; \$1.25 an issue (Free sample available). P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis MN 55420.*

Luger Badly Injured

(Continued from Page 1)

testing program in all of pro and amateur sports."

• **Gary Strydom** successfully defended his WBF title.

• **Mike Christian**, one of the WBF's larger performers, was one of the less-muscle participants in the contest. His physique was noticeably smoother than those of the other body-builders. "Mike Christian has had a tough transition to steroid-free (body-building)," WBF figure-head president **Tom Platz** said.

• Every body-builder except for Strydom has a gimmick, with introductory vignettes used to promote them. For example, **Eddie "Major Guns" Robinson** came out in **Rambo**-like attire with a fake gun. Ninjas attacked him from the side on stage, prompting Robinson to "shoot and kill" the evil Japanese invaders. Robinson then began his posing routine.

• Among the WWF personalities involved, **Bobby Heenan**, **Gene Okerlund** and **Platz** did the commentating. Midway through the show, pre-taped interview were shown with **Shawn Mooney** asking such steroid-free wrestlers as **The Legion of Doom** and **Kerry Von Erich** their predictions on who would win the contest. Earlier in the day, a "physical fitness" symposium was conducted in Long Beach involving wrestlers and body-builders.

• The show's buy-rate was unavailable at press time, however it is expected to be below an 0.1. Many cable companies didn't even offer the show.

Musings From Japan...

Thanks, Cowboy, for Top-Rope Ban

The Bill Watts era has officially begun, and in one fell swoop, high-flying matches in World Championship Wrestling have ended. Watts has made jumping off the top rope cause for disqualification. The AWA had this rule in the early 1970s, so heels could get victories after doing a top-rope move behind the referee's back. It worked then, but this is the 1990s. When Ole Anderson was booker, he thought the secret to success was turning the clock back by

John Muse



bringing in old stars from the late 1970s, like **The Junkyard Dog**, **Paul Orndorff** and **The Iron Sheik**. Ole's strategy failed. Maybe Watts thinks Anderson had the right idea about turning the clock back, but Ole failed because he didn't turn the clock back far enough.

The top rope rule could spell the end of WCW's light heavyweight division. The purpose behind the division is to provide the fans with action that the heavyweights cannot provide. If the light heavyweights cannot do the high-flying moves off the top rope, the fans will be left with heavyweight-style matches between smaller guys and WCW will be left with another title with no meaning, assuming the title has some credibility now.

By now, you're probably wondering where this fits into a Japanese column. The answer is three words - **Jushin "Thunder" Lyger**. Lyger, junior heavyweight extraordinaire and former WCW light heavyweight champ, will be working in the opening round of the National Wrestling Alliance tag-team tournament June 16 in Charleston, S.C. Lyger and partner **Brian Pillman** will be facing **Chris Benoit** and **Biff Wellington**. Think about that for a minute. We'll have three of the best fliers in the business in the same ring, and none of them will be able to do all their hot top-rope moves. Well, I guess they'll just have to do a lot of dives between the middle and top ropes.

Oops, I forgot to tell you that Watts also removed the padding on the floor. Either way you look at it, Watts just reduced what could have been an unbelievable match into just a good one. If I want to watch someone wrestle with his hands tied behind his back, I'll turn on Titan Sports and watch **Owen Hart**. Thanks, Cowboy!

P-P-Pro Wrestling New-w-w-s: Big Van Vader

sustained a knee injury on May 23 in Ueda. Vader was injured in a match pitting **Riki Choshu** - **Hiroshi Hase-Keiji Muto** vs. **Vader** - **Brad Rhengans** - **Rambo**. The injury occurred when Vader was dropkicked off the ring apron by Muto. Vader's knee hit the guard rail, injuring him so badly he was unable to get up. Vader will likely be out a couple of weeks.

- New Japan has a big show at Tokyo's Budokan Hall on June 26. Main events are **Choshu** vs. **Masa Chono** for the IWGP title, **Vader** - **Bam Bam Bigalow** defending the IWGP tag-team titles against America's favorite tag-team -- **Rick-Scott Steiner**. Lyger will also take on **Tiger Mask** (**Koji Kanemoto**) for the IWGP junior heavyweight title.

- All Japan ran its Budokan Hall show June 5 before a sold-out crowd of 16,000+. In the main event, **Stan Hansen** defeated **Toshiaki Kawada** in 21 minutes with a lariat (big surprise, huh?). **Jumbo Tsuruta** and **Akira Taue** successfully defended the AJPW tag-team titles against **Mitsuhara Misawa** and **Kenta Kobashi**. While Japanese fans are disappointed **Kawada** didn't win the main event, tickets for the August AJPW Budokan show sold out in two days without a match even being announced.

- I would like to bring everyone up to date on the title holders in the different Japanese promotions. This list is updated through June 1.

All Japan Pro Wrestling

- P.W.F. "Unified" Triple Crown Champion -- **Stan Hansen**

- P.W.F. Tag-team Champions -- **Jumbo Tsuruta** - **Akira Taue**

- P.W.F. World Junior Champion -- **Masa Fuchi**

- All-Asian Tag-team Champions -- **Kenta Kobashi** - **Tsuyoshi Kikuchi** (defeated **Dan Kroffatt** - **Doug Furnas** May 25)

New Japan Pro Wrestling

- IWGP Heavyweight Champion -- **Riki Choshu**

- IWGP Tag-team Champions -- **Big Van Vader** - **Bam Bam Bigalow**

- IWGP Junior Heavyweight Champion -- **Jushin Lyger**

All Japan Women's Pro Wrestling

- W.W.W.A. World Champion -- **Bull Nakano**

- W.W.W.A. Tag-team champions -- **Toshiyo**

Yamada-Manami Toyota

- All-Pacific Champion -- **Bison Kimura**

- I.W.A. Champion -- **Manami Toyota**

(Continued on Page 14)

Universo Wins Title on AAA Debut

To everyone's surprise, the move by the AAA to take over EMLL's Sunday television slot on Galavision did not take place May 31. This probably made a lot of people unhappy, but I was pleased. Yes, I know by the time you read this AAA will probably have all the better workers with them. Call me old-fashioned, but the way this went about kind of reminds me of someone else. Yes, I still like **Antonio Pena**, the way he creates new characters, angles and

Carlos Rey



finishes. But it's the way he brought this about that bothers me. The way he sort-of took everything right out from under **Paco Alonso**'s nose without Alonso even knowing it. I have watched EMLL on Galavision since 1984, and I feel a debt of gratitude for all the great and entertaining shows they've given. Maybe having two promotions will be better in the long run, but I just can't help being skeptical. Remember some years back when all of us National Wrestling Alliance fans turned on our television sets to watch our Saturday night TBS show only to find the WWF on in its place? Remember how heartbreaking that was? That's what has me worried about the situation in Mexico. Wrestling in the U.S. was never the same after that, and I don't want the same thing happening to an area that has kept its great standards no matter what else was happening in the wrestling world. One thing is for sure, though. The wheels are turning, and nothing can be done from stopping them. Anyway, onto reports from the May 31 and June 7 Galavision shows, beginning with the former.

1) Some more new faces debuted in the form of **Eclipse** and **Pegasus**, both of whom performed well. The rudo team of **Marabunta-Eniambre-Arcangel de la Muerte** defeated **Eclipse-Pegasus-Guerrero Samurai** in a match that was much better than what I expected. After the rudos won the first fall, the technicos made a comeback and were poised to win the second fall. But, it was not to be. Everyone except Samurai and Eniambre made some great lances (leaps between the middle and top rope outside the ring), leaving the two in the ring. Eniambre then pinned Samurai to end the match. This match was so good that it seems Alonso must have taken Marabunta and Eniambre aside and told them to get their act together.

2) This match brought us a new team comprised of old faces with a new gimmick, which I really liked. **The Cavemen** (**Popitekus-Cromagnon** (**El Verdugo**)-**Troglodita** (**Hombre Bala**)) defeated the tecnico team of **Tigre Universitario-Aguila Solitaria-Solar II** in three falls. The Cavemen completely dominated the first fall with maneuvers so brutal you would believe they were cavemen if you didn't know their identities. All three rudos stepped on Solar II's chest for the pin. The tecnico turned the tide in the second fall, with Aguila pinning Popitekus with a flying body press, Tigre pinning Cromagnon after the latter missed a butt-drop and Solar pinned Troglodita. In the third fall, Tigre attempted a lance onto an awaiting Popitekus but overshot him, thus landing on nothing but the floor. Troglodita grabbed Aguila and threw him on top of Solar. Cromagnon and he then held the technicos down for the pin and match. Tigre was checked by the ringside physician after the match, leading me to believe he may have been legitimately injured.

3) The rudo team of **El Supremo-Emilio Charles Jr.-El Eygipcio** defeated **El Hijo del Solitario-Apolo Dantes-El Filoso** in three falls. The technicos won the first fall after Charles submitted to Solitario, Dantes pinned Eygipcio and Supremo refused to return to the ring to face Filoso. The Filoso-Supremo feud was pushed hard from the match's on-set. The rudos evened the score when Eygipcio pinned Dantes with the help of Charles, Supremo suplexed Filoso for another pin and Solitario refused to enter the ring. The third fall began with Supremo ripping Filoso's mask to shreds, adding even more heat to the feud. But then, one of the worst things that can happen in a tag-team match did -- Solitario unexpectedly turned heel and would not tag his partners. By this time, Supremo and Filoso had little of their masks left. Charles and Eygipcio pinning Dantes, the tecnico team captain. Solitario would not enter the ring to save his partner. This wasn't shown on television, but the announcers said Solitario got into a shoving match with the fans on his way out of the ring.

4) This match featured great workers, great action and, of course, great officiating by **El Gato Montini**. The tecnico squad of **Lizmark-Atlantis-Canadian Vampire** defeated **Javier Cruz-Jerry Estrada-Pierroth Jr.** in three falls. Everyone was awesome from the get-go, including Estrada, who has slowed up a bit as of late. Vampire forced Pierroth to submit to an abdominal stretch, Atlantis applied a huracanrana on Estrada for a pin and Lizmark pinned Cruz. Pierroth made Vampire

submit in the second fall with a camel clutch, Estrada and Cruz made Lizmark submit, and Atlantis did not answer the count. The rudos appeared set to win the match in the third fall, but the technicos came back. Atlantis made Estrada submit and Lizmark power-bombed Cruz for the pin. After the match, Vampire and Pierroth had to be separated after brawling all over the ringside floor.

Now, the AAA's debut on June 7:

- Before the first match, Dr. Alfonso Morales was shown at the port in Vera Cruz, which apparently is Mexico's oldest and most famous port. While Morales was talking, Fishman jumped out of the water. So, he made the jump from the UWA to the AAA, which I'm sure was painful to the UWA.

1) This was a very good opening bout featuring **Winners** and **Super Calo** defeating **Dr. Maldad** and **Mr. Maldad** in three falls. Winners, Steve Sims' favorite new wrestler, is especially impressive, and is physically reminiscent of **The Lightning Kid**. Winners pinned Mr. Maldad with a rana, and Calo rendered Dr. Maldad unable to answer the count after a super dive outside the ring. The Maldad's made Winners submit in the second fall, and Mr. Maldad pinned Calo after a splash off the top rope. Both rudos were rendered unable to answer the count outside the ring in the third fall, with Calo splashing Mr. Maldad and Winners jumping onto Dr. Maldad.

2) The tecnico team of **Heavy Metal** (**Canelo Casas**)-**Brazo de Platino** (Yes, another one of the famous Brazo brothers)-**El Picudo** defeated **Superstar**-**El Giro**-**El Colorado** in three falls. Right off the bat, I'll tell you I don't like the idea of a wrestler wearing a rooster's mask, but I didn't pre-judge. Also, this was my first chance to watch Canelo in his new gimmick. Watching Superstar reminded me of a young **Mascara Año 2000**. One spot that was absolutely incredible saw Brazo standing on the top rope looking at the crowd when Giro drop-kicked him in the butt, making him jump off the top rope, somersault in the air and land flat on his back on the concrete. In the first fall, Giro pinned Picudo, Colorado pinned Metal and Superstar pinned Brazo. Los rudos came back in the second fall, as Metal and Picudo pinned Giro and Brazo did another somersault off the top rope, landing onto Colorado for the pin. The third fall brought us a great dive out of the ring backwards off the second rope by Superstar onto Metal, leaving both men out of the match. Colorado somersaulted onto Brazo outside the ring, leaving the rudo down, and Giro somersaulted onto Picudo inside the ring for the pin. This match was fantastic, with no reason to envy the Japanese. That's why every time I hear some fool talking or writing about how bad Mexican wrestling is, I figure they just must be born ignorant.

3) This match between technicos **Solar**-**Perro Aguayo**-**Super Muneco** vs. rudos **Fishman**-**Gien** **Caras**-

Herodes featured great wrestlers, except for Muneco, whose gimmick I do not like. Before the match even started, Aguayo and Casas started up their old feud again, and it looked like Fishman and Solar had something going between each other as well. The first fall had Aguayo pin Fishman, Muneco pin Caras with an inside cradle and Solar making Herodes submit. Fishman pinned Solar with a power bomb, Caras pinned Muneco with Fishman's help and Aguayo was rendered helpless by Herodes and Fishman, thus evening the match. The third fall was kind of funny but great as los technicos messed up by hitting themselves. The rudos quickly capitalized, throwing Solar and Aguayo from the ring. The rudos then tossed Muneco off the top rope, leaving the technicos unconscious, but their last action caused referee **Pepe Casas** to disqualify the rudos.

4) **Universo 2000** captured the National Mexican Light Heavyweight title from **Mascara Sagrada** in a super match. Sagrada was accompanied to ringside by his second, **Superstar**, while 2000 was escorted by his brother, **Caras**. Even with Caras causing all sorts of distractions, Sagrada made 2000 submit to a figure-four leg-lock in the first fall. In the second fall, Sagrada attempted a lance onto 2000, but accidentally hit Superstar. 2000 quickly brought Sagrada back into the ring for the pin. The third fall was full of interesting things. Superstar got mad and walked out, leaving Sagrada alone, thus beginning a heel turn. Aguayo then came out to second Sagrada, which caused all hell to break loose. Then, in a move made out of anger because Caras had just hit Sagrada, Aguayo kicked Caras low. Then, in what almost caused a riot, referee **El Tirantes** called a foul on Aguayo, thus awarding the match and title to 2000. This is the first time such a finish has happened in Mexico, and needless to say, I loved it. There might be some hope for this promotion after all. Not because of the finish, but because 2000 got the belt. Pena had to come out and threaten Aguayo after he wanted to beat up Tirantes.

Late lucha news: The AAA show currently on Galavision is only 90-minutes, down from the two-hour EMLL show. Expect the format to remain in place for a while ... Conan (Carlos Espada) was expelled from Mexico, thus he is not working on any cards there for the AAA. Conan's working visa reportedly came through EMLL promoter Paco Alonso, who got it cancelled once Conan left for the AAA ... Conan is still wrestling on AAA shows in Los Angeles, with the group hoping to begin promoting in several more cities. His WWF debut is scheduled for July, but we've all heard that before ... AAA owner Antonio Pena and WWF owner Vince McMahon had a meeting during the week of June 15. Reportedly, McMahon wants Pena to help him promote show in Mexico, and Vince will return the favor in the U.S. I wonder if Pena should trust Vince?

Letters

Wrestle War Poor; Arezzi Speaks Out

Dear Alex,

Congratulations on finishing your semester at college, but be careful in New York City. There are a lot of dangerous neighborhoods up there, though the most dangerous one lies several miles to the northeast. It's called Stamford, Connecticut.

The hiring of **Bill Watts** has really got me feeling upbeat about wrestling. I know it's premature, but with Watts in at World Championship Wrestling, with Smokey Mountain Wrestling running television and house shows in my area, and with a now-steady supply of Mexican and Japanese tapes coming in, I'm having more fun with wrestling than I've had in a long time.

As for the World Wrestling Federation, about the best we can hope for is that **Papa Shongo** turns babyface and uses his voodoo powers to turn his opponents into wrestlers.

-- Tim Whitehead
Johnson City, TN

Dear Alex,

I just saw *Wrestle War* a couple of days ago, and I felt compelled to drop you a line about it. I felt that, just like *SuperBrawl* a couple of months back, the card unfortunately had but a couple of bright spots. At *SuperBrawl*, that would have been **Brian Pillman** vs. **Jushin Lyger** in the opener. This time, you could make an argument for the Steiners match and definitely for the War Games main event. My only complaint about the latter was its abrupt ending that came when **Nikita Koloff** had barely set foot in the ring. The blood was much appreciated, calming my pre-card fears that WCW could possibly stoop so low as to present a juice-less War Games. **Dustin Rhodes** and **Steve Austin** especially looked like they went crazy with the razor blades. **Larry Zbyszko** should have been ambushed at the conclusion, setting up **The Diamond Studd's** entrance into the Dangerous Alliance.

However, Alex, can you possibly explain WCW's thinking in presenting matches such as **Big Josh** vs. **Ricky Morton**, in the

middle of a card no less? What about **Van Hammer** vs. **J.T. Southern**? A more logical match-up, perhaps, with a little bit (really a lot) more build-up. Why was **Big Van Vader** missing from a national pay-per-view event? Why are **The Freebirds** the U.S. tag-team champions? Why are they even wrestling? Where are **Terry Gordy** and **Steve Williams**? They would have been a welcome addition to that sleeper of an undercard.

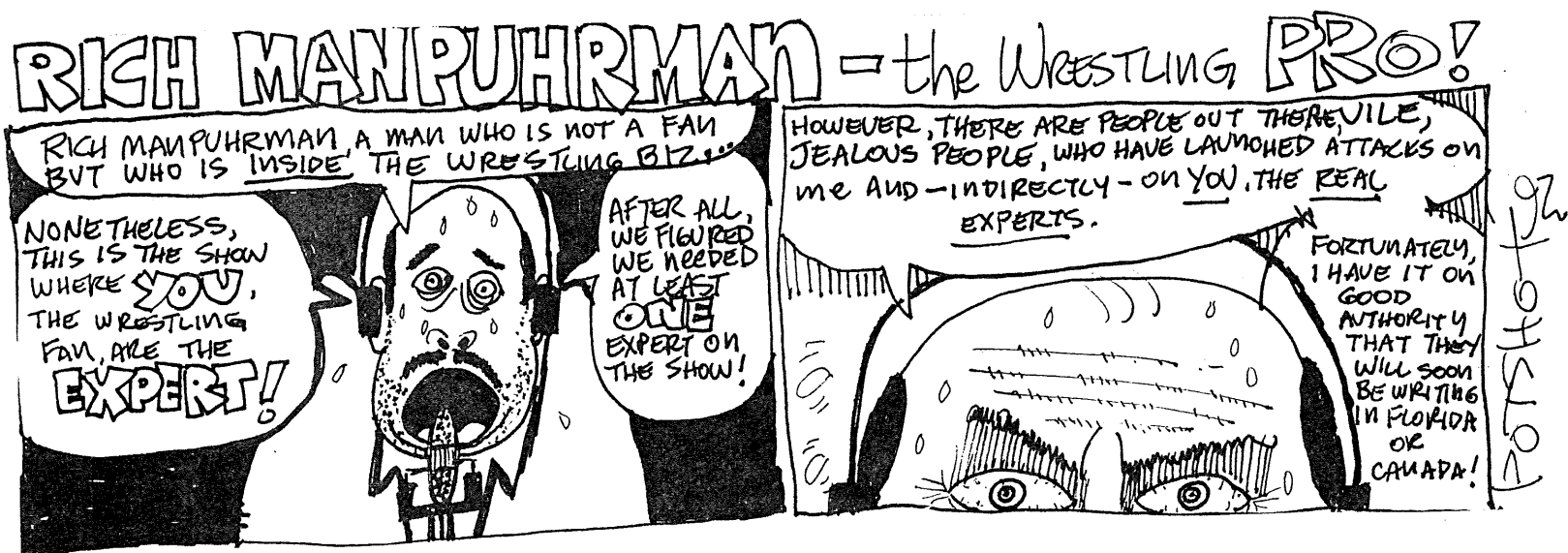
Some questions that you may be able to help me with:

- 1) Is **Jake Roberts** finally coming to WCW?
- 2) Does WCW plan to bring in **Jim Neidhart**, **Jimmy Snuka**, **Ronnie Garvin** or **Kerry Von Erich** any time soon?
- 3) Will **Hercules** remain in the **Super Invader** guise?
- 4) Do you think WCW's recent signings of former WWF notables (**Jesse Ventura**, **Rick Rude**, **Ricky Steamboat**, **Greg Valentine**, **Hercules**) is a sign the promotion is getting more respect or more a case of disgruntled performers getting fed up with **Vince McMahon** over either money, the way they're being used or both?

-- Juan Carlos Blanco
Miami, FL

AM: In discussion of the pay-per-view show, the Josh-Morton match was originally supposed to be the Studd squashing Josh, but that had to be changed when Studd announced he was joining the WWF. Of course, there is no logical reason to put run-of-the-mill matches on pay-per-view. You're right about Southern vs. Hammer. At least it had some build up, even though it would have probably been a worse match than the Invader-Todd Champion debacle. Vader wasn't booked for the show, because he had a major match with **Tony Halme** booked in Osaka on the same night (although one should fault WCW for not insuring Vader would appear). No explanation on the continuing push of Hayes and Garvin, although they usually cause no problems around the office and make all their dates.

As for your other questions, expect Roberts in WCW as soon as his contract with the WWF expires. The only name I believe



WCW is interested in that you mentioned is Garvin. I expect the Invader gimmick to disappear in a few months and Hercules to be brought back in his traditional guise. The names listed among former WWF stars now in WCW had different reasons for leaving. Ventura and Rude both had contractual problems with McMahon. Steamboat had both personal and contractual problems with McMahon. Valentine and Hercules were released from their contract and needed the work. I think the respect a former WWF wrestler gets in WCW depends upon how they are presented and if they have any talent left. Ventura, Rude and Steamboat were never buried by the WWF, and are talented enough to get over just about anywhere. Valentine and Hercules, though, appear washed up because they have done jobs for numerous WWF performers and are no longer good workers.

Dear Alex,

For the past three weeks, I have read your interview with **Vince Russo**. For three weeks, I knew I would have a chance to respond to the interview, yet I wish I didn't have to. I'm sure your readers and many others who have read about this situation are tired of hearing about it. I personally want to put it behind me. However, I must respond to the outright lies and character assassination Russo has attacked my reputation with.

I could go on and dissect your three-part interview lie by lie, but it would take me three issues to correct each one of them. I picked out some points that must be addressed:

1) Russo claims I did not sign one sponsor for the radio show during our partnership. I have personally shown you copies of contracts signed by me during the time period in question. In fact, I personally signed seven of the nine contracts during that time.

2) Russo claims not knowing about the type of show I did. Bullsh-t! As early as last summer, I gave him airchecks of the show when he was an advertiser. He also received monthly tapes. He knew what type of show I did.

3) He claims not knowing about the deal for **Steve Beverly's** mailing list. Russo was in the office while I was on the phone with Steve making the deal. We could not pay for the list in one payment, so Steve said we could spread payments out over 10 months. Russo asked to set up a payment schedule. He denies knowing it, yet he was two feet away from me when the deal was made.

4) About the three-way conversation with **Dave Meltzer**, him and I ... All we tried to do was explain why I should have covered the steroid symposium. Dave can attest to this. He also said Dave and I told him everything the WWF said was lies. This is simply not true. The bottom line is Russo wanted to go to that symposium alone, for reasons that are clear to me now. Just listen to his radio show to hear why that solo invitation was so important to him.

5) He says that during his meeting with WGBB station management, they said I really wanted to do a pro-WWF show and the WWF gave me **Jimmy Hart** and **Fred Blassie**, then stopped giving me guests when I became serious and covered the steroid issue. First of all, I debuted the Pro Wrestling Spotlight on April 9, 1989, on **WNYG-AM**, not WGBB. My first guest in 1989 was Hart. The WWF stopped cooperating with me after my second show, when **Bruno Sammartino** said some things they didn't like. I didn't get another WWF guest until 2 1/2-years later, when I asked Vince McMahon himself at the now-famous Titan Tower tour if I could interview Fred Blassie. Russo should at least get the radio stations and years right before making up a lie. And when he says I cannot get guests, I invite him to check a list of more than 150 names who have appeared since Pro Wrestling Spotlight's inception.

6) He claims 99 percent of my calls are WWF related and

Advertisements

• Based upon a belief that independent territories are on the comeback, **Rodney Leighton** of R.R. #3, Pugwash, N.S., Can., BOK 1L0 and Canadian Championship Wrestling are hoping to establish a three-to-five page section called **Territorial Trails**. Any contributions, independent match results and newspaper articles would be appreciated. This section will be published every four-to-six weeks and cost \$1 an issue, cash only. Send subscriptions to Box 30 GRP 35 SS1, Winnipeg MB, Can., R3C2E8. Call 902-243-2882 for more information.

• **Ron Evans** of P.O. Box 400, Eagle, ID, 83616-0400 is interested in resuming his **Wrestling Informer** newsletter and is searching for columnists willing to contribute work. He also produces the **Amman Ra** cartoon series. Write for more information about either.

• **Filmseed Productions and Video** of Route 5, Box 76, Forest City, N.C., 28043 is producing a video entitled "Champions of Wrestling: Autumn Anarchy." A line-up for the tape nor the scheduled talent has not been announced, but there will be a **bunkhouse rumble**. Cost is \$19.95.

• **Jason Shepard** of 1110 Vine Street, Wisconsin Dells, WI, 53965-1227, has ceased production of his **Wrestling Weekly** newsletter. He will be starting a **Shawn Michaels** fan club and the first "Newsletter Awards for Excellence" this summer. Shepard says he will evaluate 40 newsletters this summer and send out more than 100 ballots judging 20 categories. Write for more information.

I cut kids off the phone. Did he ever listen to the show? My callers generally ask about WCW, with the WWF getting a fair share of the calls, but not more than 25 percent. I cut people off when they ask questions that have already been answered during the program.

7) His claims of being a journalist make me laugh. This guy doesn't know who he is. One week, he is booking midget wrestlers on the radio show to talk about sexual harassment in the WWF and conducting a stinging interview with **Ken Patera** about the group, and the next day he says he's an entertainment critic. Then he says he is a mark. He is whatever will give him the most acceptance in the business on any given day.

8) He blasts **Phil Mushnick**, yet he wrote some very critical stuff on Titan Sports himself, until he went to the symposium and got sucked into the WWF deception machine. He should be ashamed to mention himself in the same sentence as Phil Mushnick.

I can go on and on. The bottom line is that Vince Russo is a lying opportunist. He saw an opportunity to get involved with wrestling with me and grabbed it, telling me one story about why he wanted in, yet having a hidden agenda. He saw an opportunity when he met Vince McMahon and grabbed it. He insisted I move radio stations and would not invest in the smaller WGBB-AM, forcing me to move to WEVD-Am. Yet he broadcasts "Vicious Vince's World of Wrestling" there each week.

Finally, he told you he wouldn't file Chapter 11 and rip off his subscribers, because he would be sleazy and slimy to do so. Yet, he did it. He's disconnected his phone, stopped accepting mail and turned his back on the subscribers. And just this week, he has sent many of those same subscribers flyers promoting his radio show! This guy either has a giant set of balls or just doesn't give a sh-t for anyone.

I apologize to every listener of my show, every subscriber to every newsletter in publication for introducing this guy to the wrestling public. He has caused me a great deal of professional and personal embarrassment. Vince Russo, you have to get up every morning, as I do, and look at yourself in the mirror. I know in my heart that you are a deceitful liar. I don't think I've ever despised anyone more than I despise you. You should be very happy now that you're "in tight" with the WWF. Do what you do, but don't call yourself a journalist. If you are not on the WWF payroll, you should be.

-- John Arezzi
Pro Wrestling Spotlight editor
Babylon, NY

AM: Meltzer was given the opportunity to respond to Russo's comments, but declined. Beverly, the WWF and any other person mentioned in either Arezzi's or Russo's interview has an open forum here to discuss their personal views.

Dear Alex,

I have been quite impressed with the three issues of *Three Count* I have seen so far. I wish someone had printed a directory of inside terms when I was getting involved.

You have handled the Arezzi/Russo mess very well. Based on the info so far, I would say that Russo was the one who got screwed. Well, he's not one of the "smart fan" contingent.

-- Rodney Leighton
Pugwash, NS

Dear Alex,

I want to go on record stating that the confusing situation regarding my subscription to the ever-evolving *Pro Wrestling Spotlight Newsletter* has been resolved to my satisfaction.

As is typical with my Kreskin-like powers of perception, I sent in my renewal payment to PWS before I found out about the split between Arezzi and Russo. After hearing of the circumstances surrounding Russo's intentions to publish WWF propaganda, I wasted no time in writing back and insisting that my funds were to apply only to Arezzi's announced but then unnamed project. I had no idea whether Russo was forwarding Arezzi's mail, although I had heard allegations to the contrary. This concerned me, so upon obtaining Arezzi's home address, I wrote directly to him, informing him that Russo had received my renewal payment which was intended for Arezzi's project.

What transpired between them regarding this is unknown to me. All I know is that I have never received a copy of Russo's newsletter and I have full subscription status with Arezzi's, which is exactly the way I wanted it. I have to give both parties credit for solving my subscription dilemma, and I hope others share my good luck. Perhaps I am wrong about how this was handled, but in this instance, what I don't know won't hurt me. All I know is, I am getting the newsletter I wanted.

-- Vic Stanley
Lafayette, IN

AM: Sorry, but you should know this. Arezzi agreed to pick up the subscriptions for everyone who subscribed to the old PWS for three months or less at his own expense. Thus, Russo in all likelihood kept your money and Arezzi is footing the tab for your subscription.

Ring Recall

"Unk" Would Hate Slaughter, WWF

By JOHN M. WILLIAMS
Special to *Three Count*

MIAMI -- My *Ring Recall* is not about an angle, but what an "old time" fan would think of the recent events in the World Wrestling Federation.

My uncle, Phil, was a die-hard fan. You couldn't convince him the matches were staged. He had the opportunity to make friends with Ed "Strangler" Lewis and a protege of his, Lou Thesz. The last time I spoke to my uncle, he was working out with Austin Idol, The Mongolian Stomper and Norvell Austin, who, at the time, I believe were heels. A month later in 1983, he passed away.

In 1987, I was in Miami's Knight Center watching *Wrestlemania III* on closed-circuit television, wishing "Unk" could be here to see how the sport progressed. That was before Vince McMahon decided to exploit the Desert Storm situation. You see, my Uncle Phil was a World War II veteran and a Prisoner of War in the Pacific front.

It is bad enough that the man portraying an ex-Marine -- **Sergeant Slaughter** -- never served in the military, but the fact he "turned his back on his country" is a gross insult to all veterans. It was equally insulting that since the Sarge has "seen the error of his ways," the sheep-like fans of the WWF are cheering for this bozo again. Had my uncle lived to see this, he probably would have gotten in the "ex-Marine's" face, despite the difference in their ages.

McMahon, you threw away a potential blockbuster with the rematch between **The Ultimate Warrior** and **Hulk Hogan** from *Wrestlemania VI* for this garbage. You've lost all sense for good business.

My uncle would have been more than disappointed.

"Ring Recall" is a bi-weekly feature for Three Count readers to contribute memories of one of their favorite wrestling moments for publication. Entries should be no longer than 300 words. Subscribers whose contributions are printed will receive that issue for free.

Spotlight On: Wayne Coulter

As long-time wrestling fans know, snafus in World Championship Wrestling aren't uncommon. The latest is one of the most embarrassing. The June 16 Clash of the Champions will be shown on tape delay six days later because of miscommunication between WCW and Turner Broadcasting. In an era where new WCW executive vice president Bill Watts is attempting to limit the flow of information to the wrestling news media, having the results of a major card known six days in advance is a night mare.

The person blamed for this problem is Jim Barnett, the long-time WCW executive who books the promotion's arena shows. WCW sources say Barnett blamed the problems on Wayne Coulter, the group's former director of information services. Coulter, who has begun conducting wrestling and entertainment tours in the Caribbean, denies the problems are his. Coulter also had more to say -- and not negatively, heads -- about his recent firing from the company, the tenured former WCW executive vice president Jim Herd and other aspects of WCW's front office.

AM: You're name has come up recently, and not in a positive way. Sources at World Championship Wrestling say that (arena coordinator) **Jim Barnett** has blamed you for the snafu behind the Clash of Champions scheduling problem. Can you respond to that?

WC: I made the deal for **Jim Herd**. I made the deal for June 16 because the Clash was supposed to be broadcast live from Nassau in the Bahamas at the Elizabeth Sports Stadium. It was going to be tied into a cruise called "The Cruise to the Clash." We were actually going to do an entire wrestling ship with Carnival Cruise Lines. Therefore, we were not told to change the date by **Mike Laszo**, the programming director at TBS. The reason we had locked the date in was because we had guaranteed he would be on the cruise. If they want to say (the tape delay) is because of the (Atlanta) Braves, that's bullsh-t. They could put the Braves on Sports South (a cable channel). I can't believe they said it was my fault when I haven't worked there since March. You mean to tell me they couldn't have switched the date in 3 1/2 months?

They have had five-to-six months to switch the date. Maybe the guy doing the arena booking should be blamed. This is my fault? Lonely little old me who is now in charge of TBS programming? Give me a f-cking break.

AM: Could you talk about your firing from WCW?

WC: As you are probably aware, as long as **Jim Herd** was there, I had a job. Before **Kip Frey** took over, he called four people into a room on the day Herd left. It was an emergency meeting at 2 p.m. in the afternoon with myself, **Brian Mitchell**, who is the comptroller for WCW and **Rob Garner**. He said, "Look, we've got to make this work. We have to keep the ship afloat." We put together master plan to get through the week until **Kip** would take over on Monday of the next week when **Jack Petrick** would hand him the baton. The rest of the week went fairly smoothly. **Kip** even told me he reviewed everyone's salaries, and he said I was underpaid. He said he would bring my pay up to snuff, making it complimentary to the other salaries in the office. Well, here comes the passing of the baton on that Monday and **Kip's**

doing power meetings all day long. Three minutes before a department head meeting, of which I was one, he calls me into his office and tells me my supervisor will now be **Sharon Sidello**. That was really bad for me, because **Jim Herd** had me fighting with her for two years, because she was the head of the wrestling pay-per-views and WCW was in a constant battle with Turner Home Entertainment.

I, being a **Jim Herd** person, supported his arguments, especially after he told me had signed a brand new deal. When **Kip** told me that, I was shaken, because here I was fighting her for so long and now she's my boss. That night, I went into **Kip's** office and told him I was very upset at everything he laid out. He told me to see what I could work out and come back to him. I had a meeting with her the next day, in which we also had a TV taping to go to in Columbus, Ga. I was already scheduled to take **Kip** and **Jim Barnett** to the taping because neither of them knew how to get there. I knew what I was about to go through because I fought with **Sharon** for two years and knew I was f-cked. **Kip** and I drove in the car to Columbus and I said the meeting was the sh-ts. He said, "What do you mean? Come on, between us guys, what do you think?" Before, I had arranged for **Kip** to get on the Bruise Cruise and we had done a lot of sh-t together. He told me things about the **Ric Flair** firing that if **Jim Herd** knew he had told me, he would have sh-t. **Kip** wasn't a real kay fabe lawyer because we were buddies. I said, "Kip, if you want to know the truth, you've signed my death warrant." I kind of felt bad, and was solemn at the TV taping. I couldn't wait to get out. The next day, **Kip** has his secretary call me at 3:30 p.m. She said he wanted to see me at 5:45. That didn't sound good, because everyone goes home at 5:15. Finally, I got to see him at 6:15. He told me I was no longer the director of information services, he would hold a search to fill my position, and I probably had only a couple of months left with the company. He said I should go to the Clash (on January 19), but that was because I was the only one who knew what he was doing. They wound up hiring **Mike Weber**. (**Sharon** and he) had worked together before.

Sharon worked for the company that did pay-per-view shows for Titan Sports before she joined THE. The minute Sharon got the position, I knew she was going to get rid of me and hire Mike Weber. That can't be documented and she will deny it, of course. But that was the way it was. In fact, Mike Weber was out of the wrestling business and living in Chicago before they hired him for the job.

AM: You lasted a few more weeks in WCW?

WC: I lasted for two months. But the best part of all came when I was fired. Kip calls me into his office that Wednesday at 10 a.m. and tells me that he's hired my replacement. That part should be underlined. But, he says, there are still certain things that he knows I can do for this company. He wanted me to take the next couple of days to think about what I could do for this company and put it in writing. I was scheduled to leave that week because my son was scheduled to have his tonsils taken out in Florida. I said, "Look, Kip, you just said you had hired my replacement. Are you going to f-ck me on this?" He says, "No, I wouldn't do that to you. You will still be a valuable asset to the company." You know, the whole bullsh-t. I said I needed to take some time off because of my son and I didn't need anything else on my mind. He said it was fine just as long as I got back to him on Friday.

At 5:05, Brian Mitchell calls me and asks if I had talked to Kip that morning. I said I did. He asked how everything was, and I said it was fine. He then asked what kind of conversation did we have. He then said I was terminated. I asked as of when. He looked at his watch and said, "5:05." That was Kip's way of firing me.

AM: I guess you were not a big Kip Frey fan.

WC: No, I wasn't. During his tenure, basically he did nothing but try to get close to the boys rather than represent a position of authority. That part should deal with Dusty Rhodes. (Frey) wanted to have a personal one-on-one association with the boys. Being 32-years-old, a lawyer and never having any association in the wrestling business, he had no idea what he was doing. Dusty manipulated the piss out of him. "I'm a genius, baby. Trust me."

AM: So you're not a Dusty Rhodes fan, either.

WC: No, I'm not. One thing Kip said to me two months prior to me getting fired was, "You can't even get along with Dusty Rhodes."

AM: I know you met Dusty when you were involved with trying to raise funds for the defunct Professional Wrestling from Florida group in 1989. What was your involvement with the PWF?

WC: I tried to take the company over when Dusty left it financially, but the company was in such bad shape that potential investors didn't want to take the gamble of assuming a part in it.

AM: Well, from how I understand it, Dusty didn't even invest his own money.

WC: I don't know all the actual true details. All I know is Mike Graham helped Dusty. I am not a Dusty Rhodes fan. I think the business has passed Dusty by.

AM: What do you think of the big cowboy, Bill Watts?

WC: I've heard a lot of things about him. I've met him once, but he probably doesn't remember meeting me. Anyone that knows the business is going to improve the business if they treat it from a business standpoint. It has to be a guy who understands TBS is the company that owns WCW and they have to abide by the rules of TBS. It's a hard job, because most of us know what it takes to turn the company around, especially those, like myself, who are in love with the business. But you have to put up with the sh-t from TBS.

AM: Have you spoken to Jim Herd at all.

WC: I talk to Jim all the time. He is doing very well and is doing some entrepreneurial work for several different groups of people that are not in the wrestling business. He is doing things that suit him.

AM: Is he happy?

WC: He is extremely happy. He'll be even happier when Dusty Rhodes is gone, because Dusty cost him his job.

AM: What made Jim think Dusty was the guy who was going to turn things around.

WC: (Former WCW executive) Jim Crockett sold Dusty Rhodes to Jack Petrick. He said, "Dusty is a genius. If anyone can do it, Dusty Rhodes can do it."

AM: I thought Crockett and Rhodes were trying to work together to get Herd out of his job and get Crockett running the company again.

WC: That's speculation. I couldn't say yes or no.

AM: What are you doing now?

WC: I am promoting the Caribbean. We just did our first shows, and of course, you're only as good as the information you have. We had great cards. We brought down Curtis Hughes, Junkyard Dog, Steve Armstrong, Lou Perez, Dick Slater, Kevin Sullivan and Teddy Long. We ran on a holiday weekend in the Bahamas, and from an outsiders opinion, we thought the holidays down there were very similar to the holidays here. We didn't know that those people leave to go to other islands or the states. We're licking our wounds. We've recovered emotionally, and financially we're not in big trouble. Everyone got paid. We just made a mental mistake. So, we're re-grouping. But, we're not just in the wrestling business. We're in the entertainment business. That covers concerts, boxing and wrestling. We're working on our first two concerts now. We're trying to get three dates with Chaka Khan. We're trying to sell shows to casinos and talking about the deal with her through her agent. Gospel music is also very big in the Caribbean. So, we're not just a one-minded company. We're kind of like TBS in that sense. I've worked very hard the last three

months to try and develop a good sphere of people around me. The Caribbean is truly an untapped market. You just have to deal with very limited venues and find an act that can try and appeal to both locals and tourists.

Kip decided that since I was confrontational, he would rather get rid of me than deal with me. When it comes to business, I feel I'm a good business man. There was not a f-cking soul who didn't get paid every dime they were promised. They got paid that and more, they were put in nice hotels, their transportation was furnished and they even had private charters to the island. I ran my last tour like a businessman--and I made them kay fabe.

AM: Can you talk about Jim Herd's tenure at WCW?

WC: Jim Herd I will never say anything bad about. I love Jim. He just made some bad mistakes, and the worst mistake he ever made was putting all his trust in Dusty Rhodes. The biggest problem was WCW had so much money and time invested in Dusty because of his contract that they had to go with the flow. I spilled my guts out to Ted Turner in a letter about everything that had gone wrong with the company and how there were the simplest ways to fix them up. It was incredible. But I tore it up and threw it away. I knew it wouldn't mean a hill of beans to the hierarchy at TBS. I wrote it to get it out of my system. I was screwed. I know it. They know it at TBS's human resources, because they worked with me to try and get some extra salary out of the system.

AM: You weren't the only media relations person fired. Have you spoken to Barry Norman at all?

WC: I spoke to Barry (June 7). We were trying to book Sid Justice for our next card down there against a local Haitian kid. We could have probably done a \$40,000-\$50,000 house down there with that on top. Barry is syndicating his own radio show, an alternative music show. He is in the process of signing with a syndicator. I believe he is already on in New York City. Barry feels the same way I do about what happened. Are situations were similar. I was pro-Herd, and I don't think Barry was as much pro-Herd as I was. But we both think Dusty was a buffoon, and the company will never go anywhere under his direction.

AM: Do you think WCW can go anywhere under Watts?

WC: Watts is a wrestling man. I think it can go somewhere. But I also think the WWF has something of a hold on this country, even as far as Europe goes, too. It may be too little, too late for Watts.

AM: Can you talk about your dealings with the

wrestling media and the mainstream press?

WC: As far as your situation goes, that came from Jim Herd (Editor's note: Last August, Herd issued a memo banning WCW employees from speaking to me. The action stemmed from my report in *The Miami Herald* on how Jim Cornette sent Herd a bouquet of dead

flowers with a card reading, "Congratulations on the death of your wrestling promotion." I also soundly criticized Herd in the article. The mandate was dropped after two weeks). He told me how he wanted the company run, and that's the way I ran it. Barry had a different philosophy. I had mixed emotions about the whole thing. At one point, I was anti-press because all the press was anti-WCW. I told Jim we should cut the press off, because at that point bad press was terrible press. You know the saying that even bad press is good press? Well, our bad press was even worse press. We were

doing so many things wrong. Everything was wrong. We strived to try and get in *USA Today* and get on *Regis and Cathy Lee* and we couldn't. McMahon had a stronghold. Our press was always bad. We couldn't even get the *Atlanta Constitution* to cover us. So I said we should have the press cut off.

AM: What made WCW re-open relations?

WC: I don't know. We kept hitting brick walls. We hit another one, and at one point we reached, any press was good press again. It may be different now, but we got no support from Turner Broadcasting. When Ted Turner got the Man of the Year award from Time and they listed all his holdings, you didn't see anything about WCW. That list was from Turner Broadcasting. They released it. We were constantly told we were the red-headed step-child of Turner Broadcasting.

AM: So WCW's problems, you feel, weren't all Herd's fault.

WC: If you saw what Jim went through on a day-in, day-out basis, maybe you would not have sympathy toward him but empathy. He did battle everyday and put 200 percent into the job. He's a good man. I wish more people knew him like I know him. I think they would have a different philosophy about him. I have nothing bad to say about Barnett, Ross ... They do what they have to do to survive, because this business is a survival business. When I left and put my new company together, I said I would never again get involved with wrestling in this country. This country is ruled by two organizations. Really, it's one, but one company has enough money to be a pain in the ass to the other one. That's why my ventures don't even lie in this country.

If they want to say (the tape delay) is because of the (Atlanta) Braves, that's bullsh-t ... I haven't worked there since March. You mean to tell me they couldn't have switched the date in 3 1/2 months?

-- Wayne Coulter

Parris Busy in S.C.; Mattos Has Camera Controversy in Miami

Danny Parris of Spartanburg, S.C., has attended a bevy of shows in his area as of late. The following are his reports (grades on the five-star scale).

• National Championship Wrestling at the Indian Bingo Parlor in Spartanburg April 25 drew 130 fans. Results were **Mitch Pruitt-Mike Somami** d. **Crazy Kane-Black Scorpion** (**Chris Hamnick**, not **Ric Flair**) in 18:09 (* 3/4), **Sledgehammer Dave Melton** and **Butcher Bob Blackwell** fought to a double countout in 9:02 (1/2 *; Melton challenged Blackwell to a strap match afterwards); **Billy Eagle** d. **Dave Breck** via disqualification in 11:23 (Dud; too slow-paced); **Plowboy Thompson** d. **Rattlesnake Westbrook** via DQ in 13:01 (*; Hamnick, as Westbrook's manager **Chris Landell**, Westbrook and Blackwell triple-teamed Thompson after the match until Melton made the save); **Jay Eagle-Wahoo McDaniel** defeated **The Warlock-Grim Reaper** in 22:21 to defend their NCW tag-team titles (* 1/2; Eagle got double-teamed after the match, but McDaniel made the save); McDaniel won a 15-man blindfold battle royal in 11:12 (*; Editor's note: Danny didn't say whether the wrestlers were blindfolded or the fans so they wouldn't have to watch such a horrible concept).

• NCW on May 21 before 75 fans in Spartanburg at the Bingo Parlor. The NCW title tournament announced was not acknowledged, but instead came their version of WCW's Lethal Lottery, with babyfaces and heels teaming by "the luck of the draw." Results saw **Ricky Blue** (Editor's note: Sounds like a WWF character name)-**Blackwell** d. **Westbrooks-Jay Eagle** in 7:30 (*), **Billy Eagle-Chris Landell** d. **Jeff Hamnick-Scotty Piper** in 15:20 (*), **Breck-Tony Stanblaster** d. **Mitch Pruitt-Johnny B. Good** in 9:52 (No rating; Johnny is a "Gooooood man!"), **Blackwell-Blue** d. **Landell-Billy Eagle** in 10:27 (1/2 *; everyone beat up Landell after this match, so he is now a babyface), **Jay Eagle d. Piper** in a strap match (**) and **Blackwell-Blue** d. **Stanblaster-Breck** in the lottery final in 10:37 (*; Blue was working heel earlier on the card, but Blackwell-Stanblaster and Westbrook still beat him up after the match).

Notes: Not a very good show, with announced names **Bobby and Jackie Fulton**, **Vladimir and Ivan Koloff**, and **McDaniel** not appearing. NCW returns to Spartanburg June 18.

• Smokey Mountain Wrestling held a television taping dubbed "Memorial Day Mayhem" May 25 at Spartanburg's Memorial Auditorium before 207 fans. Results: **Rip Rogers** d. **Johnny del Rio** in 6:57 (*, dark match), SMW champ **Brian Lee** d. **Barry Horowitz** in 4:02 (*), **Dirty White Boy Tony Anthony** d. **Tommy Angel** in 3:12 (1/2 *) followed by an **Anthony-Ron Wright** interview degrading Lee until he comes out and offers a challenge, **Brad-Bart Batten** d. **Scott Sandlin-Joe Cazana** in 2:37 (*), **Buddy Landell** came out for an interview fussing about **Tim Horner** until Horner came out and the two began brawling to the dressing room, **Jimmy Golden** d. **Ben Jordan** in 2:34 (*), **Paul Orndorff** d. **Dixie Dynamite** (**Scott Armstrong**)

in 5:41 (* 3/4, good match but just too short), **Robert Gibson** d. **Paul Lee** in 2:01 (*) and had words with Golden afterwards, **Killer Kyle** d. **Tommy Angel** in 2:41 (1/2 *), **Johnny and Davey Rich** d. **Cazana-Sandlin** in 4:31 (*), SMW tag-team champions **Tom Pritchard** and **Stan Lane** (managed by **Jim Cornette**) d. **Jordan-Joey Maggs** in 3:47 (Cornette was hilarious, but I was laughing too hard to remember what he said), **Anthony** d. **Lee** via DQ in 8:56 when Lee was caught using brass knuckles Anthony brought into the ring. **Hector Guerrero** ran to the ring to fink on Anthony when Orndorff (a heel) also ran in and a brawl ensued. Guerrero was hung from the top rope by his tie, and Lee was double-teamed (Anthony asked to substitute for Rogers against Lee, double juice match, ** 1/2), **Nitro Danny Davis** d. **Rogers** in 4:32 (*), **Landell** d. **Maggs** in 3:58 (*), **Dixie Dynamite** d. **Paul Lee** in 3:34 (1/2 *), **Dutch Mantell** was interviewing Orndorff when Brian Lee attempted a run-in, but was cut off by SMW commissioner **Bob Armstrong**, and **Pritchard-Lane** d. **Gibson-Horner** in 10:14 (* 1/2; Landell came out and smashed Horner into the ringpost before the finish).

Notes: **Joe Pedicino**, **Boni Blackstone**, **Craig Johnson**, **Steven DeTruth**, **Sandy Scott** and **Tommy Young** attended the card. Many of the independent wrestlers from the NCW were also in the crowd ... SMW negotiating a slot on a television station in Greenville, S.C.

Charlie Mattos and **Mike Rosenthal** attended a World Wrestling Federation show June 7 before an estimated crowd of 4,300 fans at the Miami Arena. Results: **The Mountie** d. **Sergeant Slaughter** via countout in 4:00 (1/2 *), **The Convict** d. **Virgil** with a sleeper-hold variation in 4:10 (the move is a type of chinlock similar to a police restraining hold; *), **The Beverly Brothers**, accompanied by **The Genius**, lost to **The Legion of Doom** in 13:10 (** 1/2), **The Undertaker** d. **The Berserker** in 7:30 (**Paul Bearer** and **Mr. Fuji** were at ringside; ***), **Jim Powers** d. **Brooklyn Brawler** after a power slam in an excruciating 10:40 (Dud); **Tito Santana** d. **Kato** in 10:35 (**) and **Randy Savage** defeated **Ric Flair** via disqualification on a reversed decision in 11:30. Flair scored the pinfall after using a foreign object, but the referee noticed it and reversed it (** 1/4).

Notes: The WWF does not return to Miami until Sept. 18. No card was announced ... Charlie, who was visiting his old stomping grounds from Nashville, had some fun with Miami Arena security guards. Charlie left his seat and went to ringside to take a couple of pictures, which ended up being obstructed by other fans. As Charlie went to his seat, a security guard told him pictures could not be taken for professional use. Charlie said he wasn't. The guard said that his camera looked professional and confiscated it until after the matches. As you can imagine, Charlie, an ardent, long-time WWF fan, was less than pleased.

Regulation Needed in Florida

Well, I'm here in New York City working for the *NY Times* which means I'm not in Florida. Thus, the news from Florida is a bit harder for me to corral. So, this space will feature less Florida news and more of my personal views on the business, which I think is a pleasant change. I haven't been all that opinionated in this newsletter, which I find funny, because why else would one start a newsletter except as a forum to espouse personal ideas? Anyway, I am happy with the direction *Three*

Alex Marvez



Count's going in, and this I hope will be another improvement in what Wrestle Talk radio host Ric Carter calls "wrestling's fastest growing newsletter." Of course, I don't know if the newsletter is growing as fast as my waist with all the good food in New York City. Extensive coverage of Florida returns in mid-August.

- When Florida's Committee on Regulated Industry voted last January to not pursue regulation of pro wrestling in the state, the decision was based largely on promises made by the World Wrestling Federation.

WWF lobbyist Jim Tillman said the promotion was cracking down on its false advertising. Wrestlers were no longer intentionally cutting themselves with razor blades for blood. The WWF's drug-testing program was the most stringent in sports.

Well, as hard as it is to believe this, the WWF lied again. All three statements have gone unfulfilled, with the Lex Luger injury incident the latest in a long line of fraud.

Luger was injured in a motorcycle accident at least five days prior to the World Bodybuilding Federation pay-per-view show, giving the promotion ample time to announce he would not be posing on the card. Everyone has seen how quickly the WWF can change its television product when it needs to, i.e. switching Sid Justice in place of The Ultimate Warrior for live shows on telecasts the week following Summer Slam after the Warrior quit. Luger was, to wrestling fans, the main reason to order the pay-per-view show.

Details on Luger's injury have not been discussed honestly. Had the WWF attempted alerting its fans or the media about the injury, there would be no reason to lambast them. Yet, the group didn't even have details available on the accident five days after the show,

and could offer no help on when Luger would return, when the accident occurred, etc. Even in the group's pre-recorded 30-minute special highlighting the show, no mention of Luger's injury occurred. At least not until the show started, when Vince McMahon already had the \$14.95 for the show.

Combine this with Ric Flair and Marty Janetty intentionally juicing earlier this year, with Janetty doing the deed in Fort Myers, and a laughable drug-testing program and you should realize why pro wrestling cannot be trusted to police itself. That doesn't even get into what World Championship Wrestling has done in this state. Hopefully, the Committee will reconsider the bill now that its obvious a fat-cat lobbyist was fed misinformation.

- I received the two most recent issues of the WCW magazine and "WCW Insider News," a four-page newsletter that isn't what it once was. The sheet was originally supposed to be a knock on newsletter writers and wrestling journalists, insulting anyone offering "smart information" and trying to counter it by offering its own "scoops," most of which were swerves. That format was the idea of WCW photographer Dennis Brent, who sold the ever-popular former WCW executive vice president Jim Herd on the idea. When Kip Frey took charge of WCW and the company became nice to the media again, Brent was told to change the format. "Insider News" has essentially become a newsletter for people in the TBS organization who don't understand the inner-workings of the WCW offices (i.e. a powder-puff sheet). However, they do list upcoming syndicated television matches.

The WCW Magazine, though, is greatly improved since falling under the auspices of the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* family. At least for what it is supposed to be, you know? The pictures are great, and the articles do a better job hyping WCW's feuds than their television product does. Do I hear Craig Peters for booking assistant?

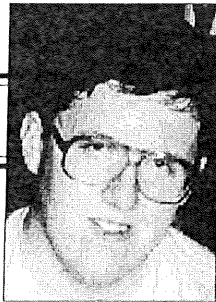
- Fascinating developments in Portland, with Sandy Barr taking over Big Time Wrestling from 126-year-old Don Owen and using Ryuma Go and his proteges in Japanese-style matches. I love it, but have the feeling it won't get over that big in the U.S. Then again, if Go markets commercial video tapes in Japan well, he won't need to worry. Plus, new U.S. wrestlers have another outlet to Japan and can cut their teeth and be able to afford a toothbrush. I hope to offer a full review of the group in an upcoming column.

Steiners Need Attitude Adjustment

A major correction from the issue before last. The episode of Love and Curses entitled "Eclipse" does not have a rape scene in it anywhere. When the column went to press, the sentence used was "in the middle of the TAPE," not "middle of the tape." I'd let it slide, but there's one hell of a difference between the two.

To paraphrase Mark Twain, reports regarding the demise of the Great American Bash in Philadelphia are greatly exaggerated. But it's not what you

Paul Hanlin Jr.



think.

The Bash will take place August 1 at the Philadelphia Civic Center. But it won't be the pay-per-view, which (gulp!) will emanate from the new mecca of pro wrestling -- Nowheresville... whoops, Albany, Ga. By then, the July 1 city workers' strike, a mere formality, should be over (It's not just the electricians' union hitting the bricks; it's the entire city government work force of blue and white collar employees.

Nice to know the "don't waste Madusa" movement is picking up steam in newsletters like the *Pro Wrestling Torch* last week. When I stated my opinions about her ability before it was picked up on, I thought I was going to be alone in the wilderness again. Keep it up, Mark Madden and company -- we'll convince them yet that WCW has a gem on their hands.

I had quite a Memorial Week. Not only did I get to see a four-time world heavyweight champion in person (Tatsumi Fujinami), but on May 27 I finally met my hero and role model. Someone I look up to, even if she's only 5-4 -- Bonnie Blair. The triple gold medal Winter Olympian, complete with autograph and a picture with her, for free no less. These days, you need to bring your credit card to get an autograph at a sports memorabilia show.

It got me thinking about others in pro wrestling I've admired, but are now plagued with doubt as to their character and maturity. Namely, the Steiners.

When I jokingly wanted a tape of "Steiners squashes from hell" that would never air on TV, I never thought of the reaction that would follow. Truth be told, the brother Steiner basically treated Fujinami and, especially, Takayuki Iizuka like, well, dog droppings at Wrestle War May 17.

"Don't give them nothing and beat them up,"

was the late, great Bruiser Brody's credo, and they've followed it to a T. But that's where the similarity ends. Frank Goodish was second to none in the art of: 1. getting the most out of his opponents and 2. bringing out their best. The Steiners seem to think their standing as WCW's top tag-team gives them carte blanche to man-handle anyone they choose and not force them to put anyone over cleanly.

They have turned in the eyes of the wrestling underground from what's good about this business into everything that's wrong with it. From the freak-a-zoid physiques to not sacrificing their own heat for the good of the company's success to being plum lazy in the ring to their rough-house tactics with the men who make them look good every weekend on TV.

There is a line between wrestling and just disregarding all the rules and courtesies of working. The Steiners have all but blurred that line and crossed it enough times with impunity to know better. A wrestling match is not supposed to be a kill struggle (a term used in the old Japanese UWF seven years ago), where a genuine attempt is made to hurt the other guy. Conduct like this has no place in this sport.

The time has come to knock Rick and Scott off their high horse. A lot of people in the sheets see Terry Gordy and Steve Williams performing an attitude adjustment perceived as long overdue. Finally, Jerry Lawler, Jeff Jarrett and The Moondogs will have someone to compete with when the various awards come out for best feud of 1992.

In wrestling, as in life, choose your role models and admirees carefully. Because, like charity, putting people on a pedestal should begin at home, with your parents first. Anyone else follows.

Speaking of parents, I want to wish my dad a happy Father's Day. If everyone had a father like I have, they would be saying their cup runneth over, too. You're the best, dad. And now everyone knows how proud I am of you.

.....

I'm going to let you in on how, if I had the book, the NWA tag-team tournament would go down on the June 16 Clash. OK, we screwed up and it won't air until June 22. Would we be WCW if we didn't mess up one part of our wrestling product?

- Steiners vs. El Boricua-Miguelito Perez: The only suspense here is who winds up in traction first.

- Jushin Lyger-Brian Pillman vs. Chris Benoit-Biff Wellington: Some fun or the winners. The losers give thanks to God. The Canadians should go over when

Pillman turns heel on Lyger and joins the Dangerous Alliance, replacing Larry Zbyszko. Biff, we know you've been away for a year, but WCW could clean house real soon. Consider this your job interview. Make it good.

- **Gordy-Williams vs. The O'Dea's:** What's an O'Dea?

- **Joe-Dean Malenko vs. Rick Steamboat-Nikita Koloff:** Upset special No. 1. The Malenkos advance. They've wrestled pro, strong and shooting style, together, separately and against each other. They're one of the best teams around, and I'll debate to the death anyone who thinks otherwise. The teaming of Steamboat and Koloff, now two months old, still defies logic.

- **Hiroshi Hase-Akira Nogami vs. The Headhunters:** The Japanese in a great, short one.

- **Silver Kings vs. The Freebirds:** Upset special No. 2. Who do you think? It should be the Silver Kings on a double-pin finish.

- **Arn Anderson-Bobby Eaton vs. Dustin Rhodes-Barry Windham:** Upset special No. 3. It would prove nepotism is dead. It would be the right thing to do. It would be 4 1/2 stars.

- **Steve Austin-Rick Rude vs. Marcus Alexander Bagwell-Tom Zenk:** Who do you think Part II.

(Now things hinge on if my "attitude adjustment" comments have any good effect. If not, I'd still do it this way to bolster interest). These second round: Steiners vs. Benoit-Wellington -- No contest; Malenkos vs. Gordy-Williams -- Please keep incoming letters PG-13, since I'm giving the Malenkos the duke, but they do get trashed afterward. The Steiners make the save, but because they're facing these guys in the semifinals, they take their time, teasing a heel turn; Silver Kings vs. Hase-Nogami -- Everyone goes all out, with the Mexicans put over in another upset; D.A. vs. D.A. -- This begins warily, then becomes a 20-minute whirlwind with Rude and Austin winning. Madusa, as on June 22, is nowhere to be found.

This leaves Steiners vs. Malenkos and Silver Kings vs. Rude-Austin in the final four. The Steiners should become the Malenkos' third upset victim. Gordy and Williams run-in after the match, but this time Rick and Scott join them and turn heel. Every babyface makes the save, but it's too late. Gordy rants they're tired of beating each other up, so now they're going to start beating everyone else. They bring out their new manager. **Paul E. Dangerously** runs to ringside, freaking out. He's told the acquisition of Pillman was a mistake and he's relying too much on pretty boys. Plus, he's pushed her into the scenery for far too long. Yes, her. Paul E. is wiped out by the foursome as Madusa laughs hysterically.

A shaken Rude and Austin, despite seeing their manager destroyed, dispatch the Silver Kings, who work as heels. Steiners, Gordy, Williams and Madusa run in and pummel the D.A. until the Malenkos, of all people,

run them off. Rude and Austin then jump their foes, and the tournament final begins. Seventeen classic minutes later, the Malenkos win the NWA tag-team belts as Dean makes Rude submit to the STF. More post-match fireworks -- The new heel group runs in, Rude and Austin get thrown over the top rope and it's a 5-on-2 mismatch. Shinya Hashimoto, Masa Chono and Keiji Muto, who aren't even booked on the card, run in and go right at Rick and Scott. After the chaos, Chono says **The Three Musketeers**, as they're actually known in NJPW) are here to avenge the beating of their countrymen at the hands of the Steiners on May 17. But we're not done yet. **Manami Toyota** of All Japan Women's Pro Wrestling, the best female worker on earth right now, leaves the backstage area and gets into it with Madusa. They go five minutes before there's a pull-apart.

You've created a top babyface tag-team. There's a second heel group without sacrificing the heat of the first. You've preserved the working relationship with New Japan. You've got feuds set for the next half-year. You've got Madusa doing what she does best -- wrestling. You've got a cadre of new tag-teams to work with. Everyone starts to buzz about WCW again.

If they book like this, there's no stopping WCW. This is what should happen. Will happen. When space heaters go on sale in hell ... after it freezes over.

Musings from Japan

(Continued from Page 3)

- Japanese Champion -- **Mariko Yoshida**
- Japanese Tag-team Champions -- **Takako Inoue-Mariko Yoshida**
- Japanese Junior Champion -- **Kim Torisu**
- Frontier Martial Arts Wrestling**
- W.W.A. Martial Arts Champion -- **Atsushi Onita**
- F.M.W. Tag-Team Champions -- **Tarzan Goto-Gregory Veritchev**
- F.M.W. Light Heavyweight Champion -- **Dr. Looser**
- W.W.A. Women's Champion -- **Megumi Kido**
- Super World Sports**
- S.W.S. Tag-Team Champions -- **Vacant** (Yoshiaki Yatsu and King Haku were champions, but Yatsu has since retired)
- S.W.S. Junior Heavyweight Champion -- **Vacant** (Naoki Sano quit S.W.S)
- W*INGS**
- W*INGS Junior Heavyweight Champion -- **Tournament to crown champion ended June 12**
- Universal Wrestling Federation International**
- U.W.F.I. Martial Arts Champion -- **Gary Albright**
- Pro Wrestling Fujiwara**
- P.W.F. Champion -- **Bart Vale**

Next issue: With things FINALLY getting in gear since my move to New York City, I can assume a normal publishing schedule once more. I'm very sorry about the delay in production. I feel like the newsletter has lost a little momentum, but I am working very hard to get it back. I was very happy with the point we were at in late May, and things should continue to improve. The next issue will be mailed one day after this one, and will feature reports from Beach Blast, Clash of Champions, an analysis of both by **Paul Hanlin**, obituaries on **Buddy Rogers** and **Masami Soranaka**, **John Muse's** look at All Japan Pro Wrestling, and any other breaking news. I hope to produce another newsletter by July 3, so we're beginning to get going once again. A special thanks to Bill Kunkel for contributing some Pot Shots cartoons, which will run during the next few issues. In case y'all didn't know, I believe the character parody is of WFAN's Rich Mancuso, one of Bill's closest friends ... Not! Thanks for the patience.

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